The
Excellent Names of God

with

Lexical and Exegetical Notes

Translated and Edited

by

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INTRODUCTION

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In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

INTRODUCTION

This brochure gives all the Excellent (or beautiful) Names of Allah which either occur in the Qur'ān or were taught by the holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him). God says in the Qur'ān :

"Al'ah's are the exellent names, so call Him by them" (7:180)

All these excellent names add up to 99. In the 28th part of the Qur'ān, 14 of these names have been mentioned with such a grandeur of diction that they send any one reciting the Quranic text into raptures.

He is Allah, there is no God but He,
He is the Knower of the Unseen and Visible.
He is the Compassionate, the Merciful.
He is Allah, there is no God but He,
The Sovereign, the Holy, the Author of Safety ;
The Giver of Peace, the Mighty, the Mender, the Majestic.
Glory be to Allah, above what they associate.
He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner ;
His are the Names Most Beautiful.
Hallows Him whatever is in the heavens and the earth;
And He is the Mighty, the Wise.

(59 : 22-24)

These epithets are not merely for name-sake but convey His excellent attributes and functions (for He is the sole

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Author of the heavens and the earth and man and also their Preserver) including His Grace and Mercy and Benevolence for His creation. How sweet and admirable is He and how much worthy of our devotion and allegiance? There is nothing that He does not possess or is not its Master. None can love us more than He nor can be more just to us. His knowledge encompasses everything, big or small. He is Originator of all that exists and there is no difficulty that He cannot solve. Then why should we not love Him, glorify Him, sing His praises, chant His name on every occasion, call Him in every difficulty, pattern our lives as He desires, follow His commands and cherish Him more than our own lives, parents and children? Where is then the occasion for offering a prayer or making a supplication or calling upon anyone else save Him?

In order to understand the relationship between God and man it is essential to know about divine attributes since this connexion will depend on the type of His attributes. If we do not know anything about the characteristics and traits of two persons or we are unaware of the cordial or obliging link that binds one with the other, we will never get to the bottom of rapport between the two. The affair between the people, the bond which fastens them to one another brings the society into existence and is the source of all laws. The nature and characteristics of the individuals lie at the bottom of marked traits of any society or community.

This is the reason why all the religions and the revealed scriptures have given priority as well as emphasis to the divine attributes over the rituals of worship and the code of behaviour governing the relationship between its adherents.

The sublime and magnificent way in which the Qur'ān has summed up the attributes and functions of God—His Power and Glory, Authorship of the world, Beneficence and Mercy, Love and Kindness, Celemency and Forgiveness, Benevolence and Wrath, Transcendence and Nearness and Wisdom and Knowledge—is so vivid in imagery and word-painting that it gives a glimpse of the real concept of Divine

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nature.

"For Allah is the sublime similitude, and He is the Mighty, the Wise."

(16 : 60)

"Nothing whatever is like unto Him, and He is the Hearer, the Beholder."

(42 : 11)

This is the reason why the Our'ān affirms the divine attributes, functions and favours one by one, repeatedly and in such detail. Divine attributes are the fountainhead of love and affection. Their assertion and the similitudes and symbols to demonstrate them whet the instincts of attachment and yearning for Him. The divine attributes and the excellent Names mentioned so elaborately in the Qur'ān and the *hadīth* have always kindled the fire of love in the hearts of the travellers on the path of spirit, made the gnostics sing His praises and obliged the believers to bow their heads in submission to Him. Had they not been aware of these their faith would become a cold formalism instead of an active, living conviction. These attributes enable us to catch a glimpse of reality, make the hearts throb with excitement, bring tears to the eyes, impart a touching fervour to the supplications and oblige us to set the heart on attaining divine propinquity. Devoid of these emotions life would become dry and barren; there would be nothing to distinguish between the human and mineral kingdoms.

History of religion and philosophy tells us that the Greeks believed in God but without any affection for Him[1]. The Greek mythology had been cast in such a mould that it was incapable of producing the feelings of love and attachment, devotion and dedication for the Divine Being. It was the logical result of their queer doctrine of a nameless God, without qualities, incomprehensible in His essence and without any power to help or harm anyone. It was only reasonable that a

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1. For details see W. E. H. Lecky, *History of European Morals*, London. 1869, Vol. I, pp. 344-45.

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God without any attributes and functions and power should have become superfluous for human life—it could not give rise to the feelings of love or hope, fear or turning to Him in the hour of need. Such a concept of God ends in His nullification, making Him an inert Being lacking all authority to intervene in the affairs of the world. The life of a people taking such a view of the Divine Being should inevitably be as if there were no God. It is so because in their craze to apply their mind to the process of negations, they overlook the positive process of assertion. All those having an insight into human psychology and philosophy, morals and religion and spirituality are aware of the fact that a thousand 'nos' cannot be equated with a single 'yes'. In order to generate the sentiments of devotion and dedication, longing and yearning, hope and confidence and supplication and beseechment one has to know what God is and what His attributes of Sovereignty and Graciousness and Mercy mean for man.

Thus we should not be surprised when we are told that the Greeks lacked love and devotion for God, their ritual prayers and religious services were akin to a body without soul or that they had no more regard for their God than their elders. A man learns about great inventors and artists of old from the pages of history, but he never has any emotion of adoration and reverence for them. These sentiments are induced when one comes to regard God as the Eternal Lord and Master of this universe and finds himself a tiny speck, utterly feeble and frail before Him.

Greece and a few other Asiatic countries were not content to divest God of His attributes reducing Him to an abstract concept but they also took the reverse process of deification of the Divine attributes of benevolence dispensing mercy, love, nourishment and providence, and even conjured up the gods of terror—all these as imaginary but perfect beings. The net result was that the Absolute and Almighty God, Creator and Sustainer of the world was down-graded to an illusive and powerless entity.

Islam avoids both these extremes and describes Him as

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One deserving all praises, Almighty, capable of conferring any favour or inflicting any harm, the Lord of life and death, health and illness, difficulty and ease, defeat and victory, in short, as the Qur'ān says most concisely :

"Lo ! His is the Creation and the command. Blessed is Allah, the Lord of Worlds."

(7 : 54)

Now we give here the Excellent and Beautiful Names of God which we have come to know from the Qur'ān or His Last Messenger Muhammad (on whom be peace and blessings of God) with their English rendering and explanatory notes since there is a great merit in remembering and reciting these names. This is a treasure not meant for any particular people or race but for the whole of humanity created by Him. Innumerable favours have been conferred by God on each and every individual and many of them love and adore Him and desire to sing His praises.

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Preliminary Remarks

The Excellent Names of Allah, which are His Attributive Names, have been taken from the *Awrād-i-Rahmāni Azkār-i-Subhāni* of Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī. The morals drawn from these Excellent Names have been indicated (against A) by another scholar Maulānā Muhammad Qutb-ud-Dīn while explanatory notes (against B) have been provided by Syed Ghulam Mohiuddin.

2. Of the ninety-nine Excellent Names of God, 5 pertain to the category of *Subhān Allāh* (Hallowed be Allah) *i. e.*, separative from all imperfections, 68 relate to praise of God as *Alhamdu-lillāh* (Praise be to Allah) and 21 glorify the Lord as *Allāhu Akbar* (Allah is Great).

3. A perusal of the Qur'ān reveals the merits of these Exalted Names in the manner detailed below :—

(i) God has Himself glorified and praised Himself in the Qur'ān.

(ii) Glorification of God by His Messengers.

(iii) Glorification of God by the angels.

(iv) Glorification of God on the Day of Resurrection and by the dwellers of paradise.

(v) Glorification of God by all creations like mountains and birds and all the beings that exist in-between the heavens and the earth.

(vi) Approval of those who praise and glorify God.

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(vii) Exhortation for praising and glorification of God by all the Beings.

4. The abbreviations used in the notes are as follows :

LL Lane, E. W., *Arabic-English Lexicon*

AM Abdul Majid Daryabadi, *"Tafsīr-ul-Qur'ān*, Lucknow, 1981-85.

Rgh Al-Raghīb al-Asfahāni, Husain b. Muhammad, *Al-Mufradāt fi Ghārib al-Qur'ān*.

AYA 'Abdullah Yūsuf 'Alī, *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'ān*, Cairo, n. d.

M Maudūdī, Abul 'Ālā, *The Meaning of the Qurān*. Delhi, 1973-82.

AA 'Abdullah 'Abbās Nadwi, *Vocabulary of the Qurān*, Jiddah, 1983.

H Hughes, Thomas Patric, *A Dictionary of Islam*, London, 1885.

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A saying of the holy Prophet, recorded in all the six most authentic compilations of hadīth reads :

"ANYONE WHO ENCOMPASSES THESE (EXCELLENT NAMES OF GOD IN HIS MEMORY, FAITH AND PRACTICE) SHALL ENTER PARADISE."

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The Excellent Divine Names

هُوَ اللّٰهُ الَّذِیْ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ (1) **Hu-Allāh-ul-lazi lā ilāha illā huwa** He is Allah, there is no God but He.	اَلرَّحْمٰنُ (2) **Ar-Rahmān-o** The Compassionate

اَلرَّحِیْمُ (3) **Ar-Rahīm-o** The Merciful	اَلْمَلِكُ (4) **Al-Malik-o** The King	اَلْقُدُّوْسُ (5) **Al-Quddūs-o** The Holy	اَلسَّلَامُ (6) **As-Salām-o** The Peace
اَلْمُؤْمِنُ (7) **Al-Mūmin-o** The Protector	اَلْمُهَيْمِنُ (8) **Al-Mohaimin-o** The Preserver of Safety	اَلْعَزِيْزُ (9) **Al-ʿAzīz-o** The Mighty	اَلْجَبَّارُ (10) **Al-Jabbār-o** The Irresistible

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الْمُتَكَبِّرُ (11) **Al-Mutakabbir-o** The Supreme	الْخَالِقُ (12) **Al-Khāliq-o** The Creator	الْبَارِئُ (13) **Al-Bāri-o** The Evolver	الْمُصَوِّرُ (14) **Al-Musawwir-o** The Fashioner
الْغَفَّارُ (15) **Al-Ghaffār-o** The Most Forgiving	الْقَهَّارُ (16) **Al-Qahhār-o** The Subduer	الْوَهَّابُ (17) **Al-Wahhāb-o** The Bestower	الرَّزَّاقُ (18) **Ar-Razzāq-o** The Provider
الْفَتَّاحُ (19) **Al-Fattāh-o** The Great Judge	الْعَلِيمُ (20) **Al-ʿAlīm-o** The Knower	الْقَابِضُ (21) **Al-Qābiz-o** The Restrainer	الْبَاسِطُ (22) **Al-Bāsit-o** The Spreader
الْخَافِضُ (23) **Al-Khāfiz-o** The Abaser	الرَّافِعُ (24) **Ar-Rāfʿi-o** The Exalter	الْمُعِزُّ (25) **Al-Muʿizz-o** The Honourer	الْمُذِلُّ (26) **Al-Muzill-o** The Reducer

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السَّمِيعُ (27) **As-Sam'ī-o** The All-Hearing	الْبَصِيرُ (28) **Al-Basīr-o** The All-Seeing	الْحَكَمُ (29) **Al-Hakam-o** The Arbitrator	الْعَدْلُ (30) **Al-'Adl-o** The Just
اللَّطِيفُ (31) **Al-Latīf-o** The Subtle	الْخَبِيرُ (32) **Al-Khabīr-o** The Aware	الْحَلِيمُ (33) **Al-Halīm-o** The Forbearing	الْعَظِيمُ (34) **Al-'Azīm-o** The Supreme
الْغَفُورُ (35) **Al-Ghafoor-o** The Most Forgiving	الشَّكُورُ (36) **Ash-Shakoor-o** The Appreciative	الْعَلِيُّ (37) **Al-'Alī-o** The High	الْكَبِيرُ (38) **Al-Kabīr-o** The Great
الْحَفِيظُ (39) **Al-Hafīz-o** The Protector	الْمُقِيتُ (40) **Al-Mumīt-o** The Controller	الْحَسِيبُ (41) **Al-Hasīb-o** The Reckoner	الْجَلِيلُ (42) **Al-Jalīl-o** The Majestic

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الْوَاسِعُ	الْمُجِيبُ	الرَّقِيبُ	الْكَرِيمُ
(46)	(45)	(44)	(43)
Al-Wās'i-o	**Al-Mujīb-o**	**Ar-Raqīb-o**	**Al-Karīm-o**
The Bountiful	The Responsive	The Watcher	The Noble
الْبَاعِثُ	الْمَجِيدُ	الْوَدُودُ	الْحَكِيمُ
(50)	(49)	(48)	(47)
Al-Bā'is-o	**Al-Majīd-o**	**Al-Wadūd-o**	**Al-Hakīm-o**
The Sender of Messengers	The Glorious	The Loving	The Wise
الْقَوِيُّ	الْوَكِيلُ	الْحَقُّ	الشَّهِيدُ
(54)	(53)	(52)	(51)
Al-Qawi-o	**Al-Wakīl-o**	**Al-Haqq-o**	**As-Shahīd-o**
The Mighty	The Trustee	The Truth	The Witness
الْمُحْصِي	الْحَمِيدُ	الْوَلِيُّ	الْمَتِينُ
(58)	(57)	(56)	(55)
Al-Muhsi-o	**Al-Hamīd-o**	**Al-Walī-o**	**Al-Matīn-o**
The Counter	The Praiseworthy	The Patron	The Firm

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اَلْمُبْدِئُ (59) **Al-Mubdī-o** The Originator	اَلْمُعِيْدُ (60) **Al-Mu'īd-o** The Restorer	اَلْمُحْيِ (61) **Al-Muhiy-o** The Quickener	اَلْمُمِيْتُ (62) **Al-Mumīt-o** The Killer
اَلْحَيُّ (63) **Al-Haiy-o** The Living	اَلْقَيُّوْمُ (64) **Al-Qayyūm-o** The Sustainer	اَلْوَاجِدُ (65) **Al-Wājid-o** The Rich	اَلْمَاجِدُ (66) **Al-Mājid-o** The Glorious
اَلْوَاحِدُ (67) **Al-Wāhid-o** The One	اَلْاَحَدُ (68) **Al-Ahad-o** The One	اَلصَّمَدُ (69) **As-Samad-o** The Independent	اَلْقَادِرُ (70) **Al-Qādīr-o** The Able
اَلْمُقْتَدِرُ (71) **Al-Muqtadir-o** The Potent	اَلْمُقَدِّمُ (72) **Al-Muqaddim-o** The Advancer	اَلْمُؤَخِّرُ (73) **Al-Muwakhkhir-o** The Deferer	اَلْاَوَّلُ (74) **Al-Awwal-o** The First

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الْآخِرُ (75) **Al-Ākhir-o** The Last	الظَّاهِرُ (76) **Az-Zāhir-o** The Evident	الْبَاطِنُ (77) **Al-Bātin-o** The Immanent	الْوَالِيُ (78) **Al-Wālī-o** The Protector
الْمُتَعَالِيُ (79) **Al-Muta'ālī-o** The Exalted	الْبَرُّ (80) **Al-Barr-o** The Benign	التَّوَّابُ (81) **At-Tawwāb-o** The Relenting	الْمُنْتَقِمُ (82) **Al-Muntaqim-o** The Avenger
الْعَفُوُّ (83) **Al-'Afuw-o** The Pardoning		الرَّؤُفُ (84) **Ar-Ra'ūf-o** The Tender	
مَالِكُ الْمُلْكِ ذُوالْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ (85) **Mālik-ul-Mulk -i-Zuljalāl-i-wal-Ikrāmi** Sovereign of Dominion, Owner of Majesty and Beneficence			الْمُقْسِطُ (86) **Al-Muqsit-o** The Equitable

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الْجَامِعُ (87) **Al-Jām'i-o** The Assembler	الْغَنِيُّ (88) **Al-Ghanī-o** The Self-Sufficing	الْمُغْنِيُ (89) **Al-Mughnī-o** The Enricher	الْمَانِعُ (90) **Al-Mān'i-o** The Withholder
الضَّآرَّ (91) **Az-Zārr-o** The Distresser	النَّافِعُ (92) **An-Nāf'i-o** The Benefactor	النُّوْرُ (93) **An-Nūr-o** The Light	الْهَادِيُ (94) **Al-Hādī-o** The Guide
الْبَدِيْعُ (95) **Al-Bad'i-o** The Originator	الْبَاقِيُ (96) **Al-Bāqī-o** The Everlasting	الْوَارِثُ (97) **Al-Wāris-o** The Heir	الرَّشِيْدُ (98) **Ar-Rashīd-o** The Right-Minded
	الصَّبُوْرُ (99) **As-Sabūr-o** The Patient		

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The Exellent Names of God

1. He is Allah, there is no God but He. هو الله الذى لا إله إلا هو
Hu-Allāh-ul-lazi-lā ilāha illā huwa

   A. Never turn to anyone (for help) except Allah.

   B. 'He is Allah' is comparable to 'I am that I am', as God describes himself to Moses in the Torah *i. e.*, I am beyond all definitions. Allah is a proper noun applied to the Being who 'exists necessarily by Himself, comprising all the attributes of perfection' (and) 'the *al* being inseparable from it, not derived' (LL). *Al-ilāh* is a different word, and there is nothing to show that Allah is a contraction of *Al-ilāh*. Actually, 'it is a noun *par excellence*. No plural can be formed from it, and it is, according to the best authorities, without derivation. The word connotes all the attributes of perfection and beauty in their infinitude, and denotes none but the One and Unique God, the Absolute, Supreme, Perfect, Tender, Mighty, Gracious, Benign and Compassionate. The English word God, which is the common Teutonic word for a personal object of religious worship.....applied to all superhuman beings of heathen mythologies who exercise power over nature and man and which primarily meant only what is invoked and what is worshipped by sacrifice, can hardly be even an appropriate substitute' (AM).

Allah is known as the *Ismāu'z-Zāt*, or the 'essential' name of God, while all other titles are considered as *Ismā'us-Sifāt*, or 'attributes' of the Divine Being.

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2. The Compassionate (*Ar-Rahmān-o*) الرحمن

3. The Merciful (*Ar-Rahīm-o*) الرحيم

A. One should be compassionate and merciful to all sentient beings.

B. Both the words '*Rahmān* and *Rahīm* are derived from *rahmān* signifying 'tenderness requiring the exercise of beneficence' (Rgh) and thus comprising the idea of 'love' and 'mercy'. Both are active participle nouns of different measures denoting intensiveness of significances. The former denotes tenderness towards all His creatures in general, and the latter towards His worshippers in particular. The Divine attributes of *Rahmat* may on analysis be found to have the following as its components— (1) His provision for every thing beforehand that could be needed by man in world; (2) His concern for the well-being of man, both in life and death; (3) His tenderness for man's helplessness; and (4) a disposition on His part to deal kindly and generously with man, 'Mercy may imply pity, long-suffering, patience and forgiveness, all of which the sinner needs and God Most Merciful bestows in abundant measure. But there is a Mercy that goes even before the need arises, the Grace which is ever watchful, and flows from God Most Gracious to all His creatures, protecting them, preserving them, guiding them, and leading them to clearer light and higher life.' (AYA). Thus the attribute of mercy in *Ar-Rahmān* is manifested before man comes into existence in the creation of things that are necessary for his life here and therefore without his having deserved them, while the same attribute in *Ar-Rahīm* is manifested when man has done something to deserve it.

Importance of these Divine Names can be judged from the fact that they form part of the sentence

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placed at the beginning of all the chapters of the Qurān except one, and which a Muslim is required to recite before doing any work.

4. The King (*Al-Malik-o*) الملك

A. One should be the master of his own self.

B. "Exalted is Allah, the True King !" (20 : 114). The sole Authority giving command and receiving obedience. God is One in the totality of omnipotent and omnipresent action, which acknowledges no rule, standard or limit, save His own sole and absolute will. It also 'means that no superiority, no distinction, no pre-eminence can lawfully be claimed by one creature over the other. He is entitled to give commands and to receive obedience and which in fact receives obedience ; the power which enforces law and justice.' (AYA).

5. The Holy (*Al-Quddūs-o*) القدوس

A. Should abandon everything else than God.

B. The name occurs in the Qur'ān. "Hallows whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, Allah, the Sovereign, the Holy, the Mighty, the Wise" (42 : 1) The Holy is 'above, and opposed to, all evils ; replete with positive good' (AM). Human authority may be misused, but in the title 'the Holy One, we postulate a Being free from all stain and evil, and replete with the highest purity' (AYA). The concept separates all impurities and imperfections from the Divine Being.

6. The Peace ; The Giver of Peace. (*As-Salām-o*) السلام

A. Should uproot the factors that lead to, and encourage, evil in society which disturbs peace.

B. God has given this epithet to Himself in verse 59 : 23.

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'Salām has not only the idea of Peace as opposed to conflict, but wholesomeness as opposed to defects' (AYA). The God is thus the source of Peace and Perfection. This attribute of the Divine Being points to the way of adopting goodness at all levels to broaden them as far as possible and to establish good in place of evil in every area of human life, on the individual as well as the social level. In short, this Divine attribute discourages all things that lead to evil ways or obstruct healthy moral life and encourages to spread the peace of mind and happiness in the society as a whole.

7. The Protector; The Guardian of Faith. *(Al-Mū'min-o)* المؤمن

   A. One should protect all from danger, vice, perdition etc. from one's hands and tongue.
   B. The Name occurs in verse 59 : 23 of the Qur'ān. *'Mū'min* is one who entertains faith, who gives faith to others, who is never false to the faith that others place in him' (AYA). If a man voluntarily comes to God, places his faith in Him, and seeks His Guidance to find the Right Path, he is shown the way which gives him peace and happiness. This is because peace and prosperity is conditional in placing one's faith in God and following His Way, for God protects those who intend to walk in the light of the Book of God. 'They remain safe from wrong notions, wrong thoughts and wrong acts and their consequences, because at every crossroad they come to know the way with the help of that Light.' (M)

8. The Preserver of Safety *(Al-Muhaimin-o)* المهيمن

   A. Should keep oneself completly away from sins and immorality.
   B. Another title of God occurring in verse 59 : 23 of the

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Qur'ān. God is Preserver of safety, guarding all from danger, corruption, loss etc. This is an attribute of kindness and benevolence. God's favours are showered on all—

Of the bounties of thy Lord
We bestow freely on all—
These as well as those :
The bounties of thy Lord
Are not closed (to anyone).

Even the process of destruction in the universe only subserves the demands of providing safety to every creature. The storms in the oceans, the high floods in the rivers, the volcanic eruptions in mountains, the snowfalls over fields, the hot winds of summer, the thunder of the rainy season, and clouds, and hurricanes—all these may not be pleasing. But one should know that but for all these, the quality of growth and development in the earth would never have displayed itself, on which depends the life of all creatures. All these are the signs of God which should awaken our souls and lead us to a virtuous life, away from all immorality.

9. The Mighty. *(Al-'Azīz-o)* العزيز

A. One ought to exercise control over one's baser self.

B. A title of God oft-repeated in the Qur'ān. God is not only good, but He can also carry out His will. Nothing passes in the universe, neither little nor much, nor small nor great, nor good nor evil, nor profitable nor hurtful, nor faith nor infidelity, nor knowledge nor ignorance, nor prosperity nor adversity, nor obedience nor rebellion, but by His determinate decree and will. Man should, therefore, endeavour to exercise control instead of succumbing to his baser self.

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10. The Irresistible; The Mender *(Al-Jabbār-o)* الجبار

A. One should avoid to become autocratic, which is not befitting for a creature and indeed proves harmful to him.

B. The title occurs only in verse 59 : 23. One whose will cannot be resisted. Derived from *jabr* which also means the mender of the universe through His will which cannot be resisted, Jabbār is 'one who sets bones, or reduces them from a fractured state, a bone-setter: *Jabbār* as applied to God, may mean the Restorer of the poor to wealth or competence or sufficience (LL).' It also carries the sense of might.

11. The Supreme, The Majestic. *(Al-Mutakabbir-o)* المتكبر

A. One should attach little importance to the world and all that it contains.

B. The epithet occurring in verse 59 : 23 of the Qur'ān means that God is Supreme above all things and creatures. It is an attribute not shared by any creature, for everything is helpless before God. A life of ease and plenty is nothing to boast of. There were many such in the past which are mere names now. By the same token, the conveniences and good things of life, granted by God, have their uses but they are fleeting and their value is infinitely lower than that of truth and justice and spiritual well-being, the gifts which come from the One who is truly Supreme and Majestic. No wise soul will therefore ascribe greatness to it which belongs only to the Supreme being.

12. The Creator. *(Al-Khāliq-o)* الخالق

13. The Evolver. *(Al-Bāri-o)* البارى

14. The Fashioner. *(Al-Musawwir-o)* المصور

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A. One should endeavour to attain perfection of his inner self and the knowledge of Truth.

B. All things in the heavens and on the earth are created by the will of God through a process which does not merely create and leave them alone. He goes on fashioning, evolving new forms, making them perfect and sustaining all the energies and capacities which He has put into His creation, according to various laws established by Him. The act of creation indicated by the three attributive names of God mentioned in verse 59 : 24 summarise this process. *Khāliq* is the Author of all creation. He is the final basis of creation; the Cause of all causes; without any pre-existing matter or circumstances. *Barā'a* implies a process of designing and evolving from the previously created matter or state; the Author of this process is *Bārī-o*, the Evolver according to his pre-determined design or plan. *Sawwara* implies giving definite form, shape or colour; so as to make it exactly suited to a given end or object : hence the title *Musawwir*, Bestower of forms or colours : for this shows the completion of the visible stage of creation. (AYA-M)

15. The Most Forgiving. *(Al-Ghaffār-o)* الغفار

A. One should be ever willing to forgive others.

B. An oft-repeated title of God in the Qur'ān. *Ghaffār* is the emphatic intensive form signifying One who, as depicted by the Qur'ān, is vast and unlimited. However serious the sin committed, whatever the nature of one's wickedness and whatever the period in which one has lived in sin, the moment one feels repentant and sincerely knocks at the door of mercy, the response is forgiveness.

"O My servants, who have transgressed to your own hurt, despair not of God's Mercy, for all sins

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doth God forgive. Gracious, Merciful is He." (39 : 53)

"This is the perennial theme of the Qur'ān. Of course, the Qur'ān does not call on man to love his enemy; but it calls on him to exercise forgiveness, for, he who learns to forgive his enemies deserves forgiveness from God."

"And, if you pardon and pass over and forgive, then surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful." (64 : 14)

16. The Subduer, The Dominant. *(Al-Qahhār-o)* القهار

A. One should subdue his baser self and promptings of Satan.

B. 'The Subduer of His creatures by His sovereign authority and power, and the disposer of them as He pleaseth, with and against their will' (LL). The epithet applied to God denotes that He possesses real and irresistable power, whose mercy and loving-kindness are not to be bought at the expense of His supreme majesty. An epithet signifying Majesty of God which occurs in a few verses of the Qur'ān e.g., "Are sundry lords better or Allah the One, the Subduer" (12 : 39).

17. The Bestower. *(Al-Wahhāb-o)* الوهاب

A. One should be willing to sacrifice one's life and all that he possesses in the way of God.

B. A title occurring in the Qur'ān, e. g., "Surely it is Thou who art the Bestower." (3 : 8). An intensive noun from *Wahaba* meaning to grant, to give as a gift, to dedicate, to offer as a present or to bestow, the title applied to God signifies that He bestows all gifts and favours out of His mercy since whatever good comes to man from God it comes as a mere

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favour, and not as a matter of right on the part of any one.

18. The Provider. (*Ar-Razzāq-o*) الرزاق

A. One should provide sustenance to his dependents and impart knowledge to the seekers.

B. The Provider of livlihood since all the fine and varied things provided for man and other living creatures on land and in sea and air, in the vegetable, animal and mineral kingdoms have been provided by God alone. 'His bounty is inexhaustible and He gives to all ; but He does not give to all in the same measure because, out of His fullness of knowledge and wisdom, He can judge best what is best for any of His creatures' (AYA). This epithet has very often been referred to in the Qur'ān as for example, in verse 17 : 30 which says, "Verily thy Lord extends the provision for whom He will and measures it out," *i. e.*, give it adapted to one's circumstances in accordance with His pleasure.

19. The Great Judge. (*Al-Fattāh-o*) الفتاح

A. Allow others to be benefitted by one's knowledge and wisdom and decide disputes with justice.

B. The title has been used only once in the Qur'ān. "And He is the Great Judge, the Knower." (34 : 26). Derived from the root *fataha* meaning to open, to disclose, to judge or to decide (besides to grant victory or to conquer), this title of God signifies 'The Judge ; or, the Opener of the gates of sustenance and of mercy to His servants' (LL).

20. The Knower. (*Al-'Alīm-o*) العليم

A. One should acquire knowledge that is useful.

B. An epithet of God often repeated in the Qur'ān to

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signify that He is the possessor of infinite knowledge. He knows 'whatever comes to pass, from the extremities of the earth to the highest heavens. Even the weight of a pismire could not escape Him either in earth or heaven ; but He would perceive the creeping of the black pismire in the dark night upon the hard stone, and discern the motion of an atom in the open air. He knows what is secret and one conceals it, and views the conception of the minds, and the motions of the thoughts, and the inmost recesses of secrets, by a knowledge ancient and eternal (H)'.

21. The Restrainer. (*Al-Qābiz-o*) القابض

A. One should restrain his vain desires.

B. A derivative form of *qabaza* which means to seize, to grasp, to contract or retrain. The epithet *Al-Qābiz-o* for God signifies that He is fully competent to tighten the means of subsistence as, for example, 'and Allah scanteth and amplifieth.' (2 : 245).

22. The Spreader. (*Al-Bāsit-o*) الباسط

A. Should fulfil one's legitimate desires.

B. Derived from *basata* meaning to spread, to widen etc., the title *Al-Bāsit-o* applied to God means One who spreads or widens as 'verily thy Lord extends the provision for whom He will' (17 : 30). The moral drawn is that one need not unnecessarily curtail his legitimate desire or practice asceticism.

23. The Abaser. (*Al-Khāfiz-o*) الخافض

A. One should cast down that which is unjust.

B. The epithet as such has not been mentioned in the Qur'ān but the idea occurs in verses 56 : 1-3 which say that when the Day of Judgement comes some will be abased and others exalted.

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24. The Exalter. (*Ar-Rāf'e-o*) الرافع

A. One should exalt or raise that which is just and right.

B. This title too does not find a place in the Qur'ān but the idea occurs at several places viz., "And He it is Who has made you vicegerents on the earth, and has raised some of you over others in degrees" (6 : 165) and "We have.....raised some of them over the others in degrees', (43 : 32).

25. The Honourer (*Al-Mu'izz-o*) المعز

A. Should acclaim the righteous.

B. Everything is in the hands of God, Who with His infinite knowledge and wisdom bestows honour or withdraws it. The Qur'ān says, "Thou exaltest whom Thou wilt and Thou abasest whom Thou wilt." (3 : 26)

26. The Reducer. (*Al-Muzill-o*) المذل

A. One ought to humiliate the wrong-doers.

B. This epithet does not occur in the Qur'ān, but the verb is frequently used, viz., "And humiliation and wretchedness were stamped upon them." (2 : 61). The name is derived from the root *zalla* meaning to be low, contemptible, submissive, humiliated. Humiliation is the natural outcome of wrong-doing and hence such persons ought not to be paid respect because of their riches or office.

27. The All-Hearing. (*As-Sam'ī-o*) السميع

28. The All-Seeing. (*Al-Basīr-o*) البصير

A. One should see and hear only that which is good and permissible.

B. 'No audible object, how still soever, escapes His

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hearing ; nor is any thing visible so small as to escape His sight; for distance is no hinderance to His hearing, nor darkness to His sight. He sees without eyes and hears without ears for His attributes are not like those of His creatures, any more than His essence is like theirs' (H).

The two titles, oft repeated in the Qur'ān, indicate God's omnipresence.

29. The Arbitrator *(Al-Hakam-o)* الحكم

30. The Just *(Al-'Adl-o)* العدل

A. Should judge equitably in all matters.

B. These epithets do not occur in the Qur'ān but they find a place in the attributive titles of the Divine Being mentioned in the Traditions. However, God's justice has been referred to in the Qur'ān at several places as, e.g., Master of the Day of Judgement (1 : 4) ; God is never unjust in the least degree (4 : 40) ; We shall set up scales of justice for the Day of Judgement, so that not a soul will be dealt with unjustly in the least (21 : 47) ; Is God not the Wisest of the judges ? (95 : 8) etc. Justice, or *'Adl* in Arabic, means to make even or in the sense whereby the two sides of a scale are made to show equal weight. Thus justice, according to Quranic concept, introduces balance in the universe and that it contains and produces unity and harmony. 'And the sky : He has elevated it and set the balance, that you should not trespass in respect of the balance.' (55 : 7-8). It is this principle or Divine attribute which is responsible for beauty and proportion in every form of life.

The Qur'ān speaks of the Divine justice in conjunction with the attribute of Divine mercy : it does not isolate justice from mercy, but regards justice as

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mercy iteself. It also says that Divine justice is not something arbitrarily imposed; every one must win his own redemption. There is no room for any 'original sin', nor for 'universal redemption'. Says the Qur'ān : 'Whoever works righteously it is for his own soul and whoever works evil it is against his own soul. Nor is thy Lord ever unjust (in the least) to His servants.' (41 : 46)

31. The Subtle. *(Al-Latīf-o)* اللطيف

A. One should be lenient.

B. God is invisible to the eyes and imperceptible to the senses but He is aware of the subtleties and niceties of all things and affairs in accordance with His perfect wisdom. *Latīf* is also 'gentle and benignant' and when used with the article *Al* for God, it means the Kind One. The title also means the Gentle e.g., "Allah is Gentle to His *bondsmen*." (42 : 19).

32. The Aware. *(Al-Khabīr-o)* الخبير

A. Should be aware of happenings.

B. A title occurring in the Qur'ān e.g., "He is the Subtle, the Aware." (67 : 14). God is aware of all things and events whether hidden or manifest. Events past and future are known to Him. He becomes aware of what enters the heart of a man and what he utters with his mouth or conceals. He is free from forgetfulness, negligence or error. His knowledge is eternal; it is not posterior to His essence.

33. The Forbearing, The Clement. *(Al-Halīm-o)* الحليم

A. One should be mild and gentle.

B. The word *hilm* means to be mild, clement and forbearing, restraining oneself at a time when the spirit

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is roused to anger. The Qur'ān repeatedly refers to this attribute of God signifying that God does not punish the wrongdoers immediately and even defers it to the Day of Judgement lest the sinner might repent and He may forgive him. The attributes like forbearance, benevolence and forgiveness are concomitants of Divine mercy. The epithet appears at numerous places in the Qurān, as e.g., "And Allah is Appreciative, Forbearing". (64 : 17).

34. The Supreme, The Mighty. (*Al-'Azīm-o*) العظيم

A. Should be assiduous in acquiring knowledge of the Divine Commands.

B. *'Azīm* means the mighty, the great ; when employed with *Al*, it signifies the Supreme Being *i. e.*, above all imperfections and immeasurably and eternally exalted and dissimilar to anything conceivable. To Him belongs the power and the might and His is the dominion and excellency, and the creation and the command thereof. "He is the High, the Supreme" (2 : 255), "Lord of the mighty Throne" (9 : 129) and "Possesser of the mighty grace" (2 : 105).

35. The Most Forgiving. (*Al-Ghafoor-o*) الغفور

A. One should pardon others for their mistakes.

B. *Al-Ghafoor* has exactly the same meaning as *Al-Ghaffār*. The two epithets for the same attribute oft-repeated in the Qur'ān indicate the emphasis God wants to place on this quality to be imbibed by the believers, and of which an example unparalled in history of the world has been set by the holy Prophet. The people who had not only been guilty of the gravest atrocities against his own person, but had also wrought many other wicked deeds, and deserved

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to be severely punished, were forgiven on the occasion of the conquest of Mecca by the holy Prophet with a magnanimity unknown to man. It was done to the tyrants who were at the mercy of the Prophet, at the time of greatest excitement and when his own companions would have rightfully expected him not only to take lawful revenge but also to restore their lost property to them. And this was not all. Before his departure from this fleeting world, the Prophet was asked, through a revelation at the very place he had had to face all those atrocities, to pray for the forgiveness (verse 110 : 3) of all despite the enormities and sins which the Meccans had committed before accepting Islam against the Divine Being. This incident amply elucidates the Quranic concept of forgiveness : "Your Lord has prescibed mercy on Himself ; so that any of you who does an evil through ignorance and then repents and amends, then verily He is Forgiving, Merciful." (6 : 54).

36. The Appreciative. (*As-Shakoor-o*) الشكور

A. Should be thankful to God for His grace.

B. Derived from the root *shakara* which means : (1) to give thanks, become greatful, and (2) to be appreciative, being bountiful in giving a reward, this intensive epithet as applied to God signifies, 'He who gives large rewards for small, or few, works' (LL) or, 'one who highly appreciates good and is bountiful in rewarding it.' (AA). The Qu'rān says : "And whoso does good voluntarily, then surely Allah is Appreciative, Knowing" (2 : 158) *i. e.*, surely Allah is ever bountiful in rewarding all good deeds performed with the sincerity of purpose for He is aware of the innermost thoughts of the doer.

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37. The High (*Al-'Ali-o*) العلی

38. The Great ; The Exalted. (*Al Kabīr-o*) الکبیر

A. Do not feel humble and lowly in the presence of others.

B. "Verily Allah ; He is the High, the Great" (22 : 62). God of Islam is the Universal Patron, the All-in-All, Ruler and Protector. 'He can do anything and is not bound by any conditions or by any co-equal entities. This refutes *in toto* the position of deists and others who have restricted the Divine activity to the creation of the world and fixation of its primary collocations, and also the doctrine of those like Arya Samaj, who conceive God as no other than 'a great cosmic Executive, whose business it is to preside over the inexorable process of transmigration and *karma*.' In Greece, the power even of the highest god was limited, and overruling fate then became an inexorable law, before which even he must bow. Not a tribal deity, nor the national God, nor yet 'Lord of the Hosts', or the anthropomorphic 'our Father in Heaven', the God of Islam rules and sways the world' (AM). He is Living, Powerful, Mighty, Omnipotent, not liable to any defect or limitation and eternally Exalted. The Supreme Being is the only Agent, the only Force, the only Act existing throughout the universe ; the rest is downright instrumentality, from the hightest archangel down to the simplest atom of creation.

39. The Protector, The Guardian. (*Al-Hafīz-o*) الحفیظ

A. Guard the limits set by the Shari'ah.

B. The epithet does not occur in the Qur'ān, but it reminds man, at several places, that God alone

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protects and guards all creations, for without a constant care and guarding eye, the marvellous order, beauty, and harmony, on a scale of grandeur which we appreciate more and more as our knowledge increases, would not last even for a day. 'Taking the physical heavens, we can imagine the supreme melody or harmony—the Music of the Spheres—guarded from every disturbing force.' (AYA) "And assuredly We have set constellations in the heaven and made it fairseeming to the onlookers. And We have guarded it from every Satan accursed." (15 : 16-17) And again ; "And thy Lord doth watch over all things" (34 : 21), says the Qur'ān to describe the guardianship of Allah for His creation.

40. The Controller. *(Al-Muqīt-o)* المقيت
The Provider.

A. Should feed the hungry.

B. An epithet of the Divine Being referred to in verse 8 : 88 of the Qur'ān : "And verily Allah is Controller of every-thing." The word *muqīt* lit. means capable, overseer and controller as well as provider and sustainer. The verse cited here carries all the different shades of meanings inherent in *Al-Muqīt*, since God has power over all things.

41. The Reckoner. *(Al-Hasīb-o)* الحسيب

A. Should help others in their needs and continue to introspect over one's deeds.

B. The title does not occur in the Qur'ān which, however, refers to Him as the Reckoner of all deeds, viz., "And Allah suffices as a Reckoner". (33 : 39). God is not only the Master of the Day of Judgement when all men shall be finally requitted according to their actions, God also keeps a watch over all and

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has full authority to punish them even in this world. It is only the righteousness in the eyes of God (who also knows the intention with which anything is done) that matters and hence it is necessary that one should always keep on examining one's own deeds, thoughts and feelings.

42. The Majestic. *(Al-Jalīl-o)* الجليل

A. Should attain self-perfection.

B. God is Majestic since He is perfect and compels every being to pay honour to Him. Everything else, even those most magnificent, are but fleeting. 'Empires, the wonders of Science and Arts, the splendours of human glory or intellect will pass away. The most magnificent objects in outer Nature—the mountains and valleys, the sun and moon, the constallation Orion and the star Sirius—will pass away in their appointed time '(AYA) as nothing is perfect. Only God's glory, His Being, Essence and Attributes are perfect and majestic which will last for ever and compel every creation to pay honour to Him.

43. The Noble, The Bountiful. *(Al-Karīm-o)* الكريم

A. One should be gracious and magnanimous.

B. The epithet signifies generosity, kindness, beneficence, graciousness and concord and has been used in the Qur'ān, as an adjective to God as well as the Prophet, Gabriel, the Qur'ān, the Throne of Majesty, etc. According to the contents and its place in a phrase the different shades of the meaning of the word would be chosen to suit the context (AA). A few examples are: "A noble angel" (12 : 31), "A noble Messenger" (44 : 17), "This is indeed a holy recitation *i.e.*, the Qur ān" (56 : 77), "Thou wast the Mighty, the Noble" (44 : 59), "The Lord

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of the Throne of grace" (23 : 116) and "Thy Lord, the Bountiful" (82 : 6). Generosity, benevolence, nobility, magnanimity etc., of God being the perennial themes of the Qur'ān, which have been elucidated at countless places in it in different ways, this epithet of the Almighty gives birth to the emotions of loving regard for the Lord and urges man to be himself kind and benevolent to others.

44. The Watcher. *(Ar-Raqīb-o)* الرقيب

A. Should be always careful of one's own baser self and promptings of the Satan.

B. A title of the Divine Being referred to in verses 4 : 1 and 55 : 33—"Verily Allah is even a watcher over you". Being the Creator and Preserver of all, He is naturally watchful of everything. Nobody should entertain any misconception about His not being aware or overlooking what one does openly or secretly.

45. The Responsive, Answering. *(Al-Mujīb o)* المجيب

A. Should willingly obey Divine commandments.

B. This epithet occurs in verse 11 : 61 which runs : "Therefore ask forgiveness of Him, then turn to Him in repentence; verily my Lord is Nigh, Responsive." This title like certain other Attributive Names of God emphasises His mercy which is ever willing to forgive the sins of His creatures provided they sincerely repent and make a firm resolve not to commit them again. One should, therefore respond to divine command and be willing to obey Him.

46. The Bountiful, All-Pervading. *(Al-Wās'i-o)* الواسع

A. One should never by stingy.

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B. The title *Wās'i-un* has been used for God in the Qur'ān in different contexts, such as, "whither you turn you would find God All-Pervading" (2 : 115), "God is bountiful (in elevating and exalting any person)" (2 : 247), "God is Bountiful in rewarding" (2 : 261) and "of vast forgiveness" (53 : 12). Indefinable within the categories of human thought as God is, this epithet suggests that His every Attribute is so vast or capacious that its scope or extent cannot be possibly conceived. We can have some idea of it from verse 31 : 27 which says : "And if whatever trees are on the earth were pens, and sea were ink, with seven more to help it, the words of Allah (i.e. words denoting His excellence, His attributes and His perfections) could not be exhausted; verily, Allah is Mighty, Wise."

47. The Wise. (*Al-Hakīm-o*) الحکیم

A. One should endeavour to increase his knowledge, experience and prudence.

B. This Attributive name of God frequently occurs in the Qur'ān, e.g., "Surely, Thou alone art Mighty, Wise" (2 : 129). God is the Possessor of infinite wisdom who has endowed every man with as much knowledge and prudence as fitted him and accorded his capacity. It also follows that His injunctions to man are full of wisdom for him and the human society.

48. The Loving, The Affectionate. (*Al-Wadūd-o*) الودود

A. Should love the righteous.

B. An epithet of God, e.g., 'And He is the Forgiving, Loving." (85 : 14). A great number of divine attributes are nothing but a manifestation of His love and affection for His creation, particularly man. The affectionate and tender regard God has for man is

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best illustrated by a *hadīth* related by Abū Huraira from the holy Prophet which is also a meaningful allegory on God's concern for human welfare.

"Allah will ask someone on the Day of Judgement," relates Abu Huraira, 'O son of Adam, I fell ill but you did not come to see Me?' Man will reply, 'Allah ! Thou wert the Lord of the worlds ; How could have I attended Thee ?' God will then say, 'Did you not know one of My servants had fallen ill, but you did not go to attend him. Did you not know that if you had attended him, you would have found Me by his side ?'

'O son of Adam, I asked for food from you, but you did not give it to Me,' God will ask another individual who will answer, 'Allah ! Thou wert the Sustainer of the worlds ! How could have I fed Thee?' God will then say, 'One of My servants asked you for food, but you refused it to him. Had you fed him, you would have found Me near him !'

'O son of Adam, I asked for water from you, but you rufused it to Me,' God will similarly ask again. Man will say in reply, 'Thou wert the Lord of the worlds. How could have I quenched Thy thirst ?' God will answer, 'One of My servants demanded water from you but you refused. Had you given him water you would have found Me near him !'

Can there be any better concept of God's tender regard for man.

49. The Glorious, The Illustrious. (*Al-Majīd-o*) المجيد

A. One should achieve celebrity through virtuous conduct.

B. Allah is "Lord of the Throne, the Glorious ; Performer of what He wills" (85 : 15-16). This attributive name of God portrays His absolute will, dominace

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and power. 'His is the absolutely sovereign will, unfettered by any conditions or restrictions. Nothing can come between His will and execution. Unlike the head of many a pantheon, who is surrounded by fellow deities and whose will frequently clashes with them and who must at times bow to the over-ruling Fate, the God of Islam is all-in-all, Sovereign in absolute sense of the word.' (AM)

50. Sender of the Messengers, Revivifier. (*Al-Bā'is-o*) الباعث

A. Purify one's heart with God's remembrance.

B. The title does not occur in the Qur'ān but the revelation from Him reminds man, at several places, that He has, in His mercy, sent messengers to all the nations and communities (10 : 47, 7 : 35, 15 : 10) to deliver His messages (16 : 36). There are references to the Apostles of God whose names have been mentioned in the Qur'ān at numerous places and there have been messengers whose names do not find a place in it (10 : 74). These messengers were sent by God since He did not want to punish any people before warning them about the consequences of their evil behaviour (6 : 130-31).

If one should ponder over the working of natural phenomena it would be clear to him that the whole system is devised to sustain life on earth. The sun is there to give light and heat and methodically draw out water from the ocean. The winds are there to produce alternately coolness and warmth. Sometimes they weft particles of water up into the skies and sometimes they reduce these into water again. The earth is there to serve as a perennial store-house of the means of growth and sustenance, and to offer from within its bosom life to every grain, and growth

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to every plant. Life's workshop is incessantly engaged in this process. Apart from these material things, there are forces of nature, some of which we have discovered through scientific methods, which have made life possible on this planet. These are all manifestations of divine mercy which has made provision for our material requirements. But there are many other imperceptible needs about which our sense perceptions provide us no knowledge and among these is the guidance we need to lead a virtuous life on this planet. Only the prophets of God are competent to reveal the nature and attributes of God, His commandments and injunctions, relative qualities of faith and action, good and bad consequences of virtues and vices, merits of heavenly kingdom and the doom of infernal regions. The Qur'ān tells us : "(He is) the Knower of the Unseen, and He reveals unto none His secrets, save unto every messenger whom He had chosen" (72 : 26-27). They are the divine Warners unto their people for they put mankind on its guard through exhortation and admonition like a guardian, kind and loving. This grace and mercy of God is indicated by the Attributive Title *Al-Ba'is-o*.

51. The Omnipresent, The Witness. (*As-Shahīd-o*) الشهيد

A. Should be ever willing to participate in virtuous deeds.

B. The title frequently occurs in the Qur'ān, e. g., "Say thou, O people of the Book ! why do you deny the revelations of Allah, while Allah is a Witness of what you work." (3 : 98) 'He is Ever-Living, Ever-Present. Witness of all human actions, passions and motives. If not His love, then His fear and the consciousness of His omniscience, ought to prompt one to a life of truth, integrity and honour.' (AM)

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52. The Truth. (*Al-Haqq-o*) الحق

A. Should be persevering in all matters of truth.

B. "High above all is God, The King, The Truth," (20 : 114) says the Qur'ān because God is the only Reality while all other things, the wonderful complexities, gradations and nuances that we find in the world blended in one harmonious whole are His creations obeying the Law laid down by Him None of these has any separate entity of its own, nor can any of these exist by itself It would amount to falsehood to put anything in competition or equality with Him. Mystics have accordingly taken the view that nothing really exists except God, for nothing can be like Him or claim to be His rival or partner. *Haq* also signifies stability or durability. This epithet of God advances the claim of truth to durability, to its right to prevail over what is *bātil* or false which is thus bound to disappear.

53. The Trustee. (*Al-Wakīl-o*) الوكيل

A. Should be helpful to others.

B. The word *Wakīl* lit. means one who takes the care of a thing for another, the witness to a bargain and guardian. Hence, when used with the art. *Al* it signifies the Disposer of all affairs and Protector of His faithful servants, and the One who is able to settle accounts with the enemies. The Qur'ānic expressions like "Suffices us Allah, and an excellent Trustee is He" (3 : 173) mean that God being All-good and All-powerful, all our affairs can best be entrusted to His care. He is the best guardian of all interests. The Qur'ān teaches that after taking all humanly possible precautions against one's enemies, one should always put his trust in God, who is aware of the inner workings of events than any human mind

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can conceive. Therefore, in consonance with this divine attribute, every man should act as a trustee and helper unto others.

54. The Mighty, The Strong. (*Al-Qawī-o*) القوی

55. The Firm. (*Al-Matīn-o*) المتین

A. Should be strong in faith.

B. God has been described at several places as 'The Mighty', 'The Strong', viz., "Verily thy Lord ! He is the Strong, the Mighty" (11 : 66) and "Verily Allah ! He is the Provider, Owner of Power, the Firm" (51 : 58). God is Almighty, He is able to carry out every part of His will and plan and can also infuse strength in whomsoever He desires. Nothing can escape His grasp, nor can the vicissitudes of things elude His power. He is also Firm *i. e.*, solid and strong, requiring no support from anything. His power is steadfast, the same today as it was yesterday and will remain so forever. To be short, the effects of His might are innumerable and the objects within His power inconceivable.

56. The Patron, The Helper. (*Al-Walī-o*) الولی

A. Should be a patron of faith.

B. A title often used for God in the sense of Patron, Guardian and Helper as in these verses : "And for you there is, besides Allah, no guardian or helper" (2 : 107) and "Allah is the Patron of those who believe" (2 : 257). Calling God as the Patron, Helper or Guardian implies that there is nothing else which can be compared to Him in these aspects. The concept of 'patron-saints,' 'guardian-angels' or 'saviours' is found in many religions, not necessarily

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those which are polytheistic but even those which claim monotheism to be their creed. Islam rejects it altogether and holds that elevating any saint or angel or even a prophet as a helper in such matters as increasing one's sustenance, forgiving of sins, curing anyone from illness, granting a child or granting salvation amounts to *shirk i. e.*, associating others with God.

57. The Praiseworthy. (*Al-Hamīd-o*) الحميد

A. One should try to become deserving of admiration by others.

B. An Attributive Name of God occuring at several places in the Qur'ān as, "And know that Allah is Self-sufficing, Praiseworthy." (2 : 267) Active participle of the root *hamd* which means not only praise but "also implies admiration; and it implies the magnifying or honouring of the object thereof" (LL). God is Praiseworthy because He is perfect in His Person and Attributes; He is the Author of everything that deserves our admiration and thus it is only He, in the last analysis, who deserves all praises.

58. The Counter. (*Al-Muhsī-o*) المحصى

A. One should remember all his actions.

B. "The Counter", e.g., "Verily We ! We shall raise the dead and We write down what they have forwarded and what they have left behind. And everything We have counted up in a Luminous Record." (36 : 12) Reason, justice and morality demand that there should be another life in which complete account should be taken of what man had done from his maturity until his death and of what his actions have left behind, good or bad, which have influenced generation after

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generation for a long time after his death. If there was no accountability and no reward for good deeds and punishment for bad deeds, it would mean that this world was without justice and the whole life of man was meaningless, purposeless and fruitless. Then, in this earthly life, there can be no possibility of complete accountability, justice, or reward and of punishment. No intelligent and reasonable man could ever think that this whole planetory system and the life on this earth with man as its perfect specimen were created for nothing and that everything would end in nothing. Thus, a logical conclusion that follows is that the Creator of man must keep an account of man's actions and requite the good and the bad with justice in afterlife. "Then whosoever has done good an atom's weight will see it." (99 : 7-8). This will be made possible by keeping a complete record of everybody's deeds as stated in verses 50 : 18 and 82 : 11.

59. The Originator. (*Al-Mubdī-o*) المبدی

60. The Restorer. (*Al-Mu'īd-o*) المعید

A. One should be the first in beginning a good deed and should do it repeatedly.

B. These titles have not been mentioned in the Qur'ān but the idea has been expressed at several places, e.g., "Do they not see how Allah originates creation ? And then He shall restore it ; surely that is easy for Allah" (29 : 19). Another verse says : "Verily He ! He (it is) Who begins (the creation) and repeats." (85 : 13). 'The originating of creation is the creation of primeval matter. The repetition of the process of creation goes on constantly, for at every moment new processes are being called into being by the creative

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power of God, and according to His Laws. And the final creation as far as man is concerned will be in the *Ma'ād*, when the whole world as man sees it will be entirely newly created on a different plane. As far as God is concerned, there is nothing final—no first and last, for He is infinite.' (AYA). In their wider connotations origination and recreation signify two events which are costantly taking place. At every moment there is origination as well as recreation of what has died and decayed in the physical world. The whole universe would appear, on a little more reflection, in a state of continuous renovation, and constant decay.

61. The Quickener. (*Al-Muhiy-o*) المحيي

62. The Killer. (*Al-Mumīt-o*) المميت

A. One should quicken his heart by making it perfect and kill his self *i. e.*, baser desires.

B. God is the sole operator in the matter of life and death—this fact has been repeatedly exphasised in the Qur'ān, "My Allah is He who gives life and causes death". (2 : 258) "And (it is) Allah (who) makes alive and causes to die." (3 : 156) "Look then at the effects of Allah's mercy : How He revives the earth after its death, verily He is the Quickener of the dead, and He is Potent over everything." (30 : 50) If God so wills, He can annihilate the world in a moment and if He so desires, can recreate it in an instant. Nothing is difficult for Him, whether it be the creation of a fly or that of seven Heavens. The mysteries of life and death are entirely in His hands : both are His creations and there is no basis for having separate deities of life and death.

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63. The Living. (*Al Haiy-o*) الحي

A. Should strive for the good of eternal life to come.

B, An epithet frequently occuring in the Qur'ān, e. g., "Allah ! there is no God but He, the Living, the Sustainer". (2 : 255). He lives, but His life is self-subsisting and eternal : it does not depend upon other beings and is not limited to time and space. 'Even a fact so patent as the deathlessness of God has needed a clear affirmation in view of the particular sacrifice of heathen gods every spring, as also in view of the 'Christ-God' who suffered death at the hand of his persecutors.' (AM). The death of a deity had been a common incident mentioned in the mythologies of many religions.

64. The Sustainer. (*Al-Qayyūm-o*) القيوم

A. Should be firm in the service of God.

B. An Attributive Name frequently occuring in the Qur'ān with 'The Living', viz., 'Allah ! There is no God but He, the Living, the Sustainer." (3 : 2). One who is self-subsisting and by whom all other things subsist. "By the mere mention of life and self-subsistance as His two essential attributes, the possibility of all co-partnership with Him is negatived outright. Contrast this with the Christian belief that 'the Father is no more God without the Son than the Son is God without Father' (*Ency. of Religion and Ethics*, VII, p. 536) as also the Hindu belief that certain deities, at any rate, 'are the offspring of others, and that the gods were originally mortal, who have only acquired immortality either by the practice of austerities or by drinking Soma or else by receiving it as gift from Agni and Savita'. (*ib*. XII, p. 602). Obviously Islam brushes aside all such absurdities." (AM). This attribute of God perhaps needed to be

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affirmed in view of the superstitious beliefs that the deities are to be served with articles of food and drink during ritual service to them in order to satisfy and please them. Take for instance the sacrifice which has been a universal element of worship in almost all religions and it has been expressive of a concept of furnishing provisions to God. But the Qur'ān contradicts these concepts by saying: "Their flesh and their blood reach not Allah, but the devotion from you reacheth Him." (22 : 37).

65. The Rich, The Abounding. (*Al-Wājid-o*) الواجد

A. Should not ask anyone for anything except from God.

B. One of the Excellent Names of God which does not occur in the Qur'ān but the idea finds a place at several places by laying stress on the fact that everything in the heavens and the earth belongs to God. "And there is nothing of which there are not with Us treasures". (15 : 21) says the Qur'ān. It simply means that everything that man requires is present with God in an inexhaustible quantity. For every want and every need it befits man to turn to God instead of demeaning himself by beseeching anyone other than God for his worldly requirements. This epithet is analogous to another Divine title *Al-Ghanī* occuring in the holy Qur'ān.

66. The Glorious, The Noble. (*Al-Mājid-o*) الماجد

A. One should attain dignity through self-perfection.

B. The title does not occur in the Qur'ān but finds a place in the *hadīth* wherein the Prophet called God by this name also. Its root being the same as that of *Majīd* (no. 49), both the names allude to the same attribute *i. e.,* Glory and Exaltedness of the Divine Being. It is His will which is Supreme and All-

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Powerful, and not any abstract cosmic law over which He has relinquished control after creating it. This had been the concept held not by certain ancient philosophical schools but the view is also subscribed by certain religions and schools of thought today.

67. The One (*Al-Wāhid-o*) الواحد

68. The One (*Al-Ahad-o*) الاحد

A. Should endeavour to become unique in the service of God.

B. Divine names occuring in the Qur'ān: "And your God is the One God (*Wāhidūn*)", (2: 163) and "Say thou, He is Allah, the One (*Ahad*) (112:1). The first alludes to His being unique and perfect in His attributes while the other to His being One in person and nature. The latter epithet is applied to God alone: 'He who has ever been One and alone; or the indivisible: or He Who has no second to share in His Lordship, nor in His essence, nor in His attributes'. (LL)

'This is monotheism *par excellence*, and not mere monolatry. Verses like the above are meant to emphasise the fact that only One God *exists*, not that one God is to be worshipped to the exclusion of other gods. This unequivocally repudiates and condemns the Trinity of Christian godhead, the dualism of the Zoroastrian divinity, and the multiplicity of the gods of polytheistic peoples'. (AM).

The Unity of God is the noble theme on which the holy Qur'ān lays great stress. There is absolute unity in Divine nature ; it admits of no participation or manifoldness in Divine functions. Unity is the key-note to the conception of Divine Being in Islam ; it denies all plurality of persons in Godhead and any

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participation of any being in the affairs of the world. According to Hitti, "in this uncompromising monotheism, with its simple, enthusiastic faith in the supreme rule of a transcendent being, lies the chief strength of Islam as a religion" (*History of the Arabs*, p. 129).

69. The Independent, The Absolute, The Eternal. (*As-Samad-o*) الصمد

A. Should become so perfect in spirit that everybody may seek guidance from him.

B. *Samad* is difficult to translate by one word. It may be independent of every one, and yet besought of all *i. e.*, lacking in nothing and wanting none to complement Him; the Absolute; the Eternal. Thus it negates the idea of gods and goddesses who ate and drank, wrangled and plotted, depended on the gifts of worshippers, powers (*verdān*) granted by other gods etc. The epithet applied to God signifies 'A Lord: because one repairs, betakes himself or has recourse, to him, in exigencies, or, when applied to God, because affairs are stayed, or rested, upon Him and none but He accomplishes them; .....or the Being that continues, or continues for ever, or is everlasting; or the Creator of everything, of whom nothing is independent, and whose unity everything indicates.' (LL)

The holy Prophet is reported to have said, when asked what *As-Samad* was: 'He is the Lord to whom recourse is had in every need.' The statement implies that nothing is independent of Him and it aims at the correction of error of those who consider that certain things, such as matter and soul, had existed independently of the Creator. This doctrine is subscribed by certain polytheistic creeds. It also

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corrects the error of associating anyone, such as, the Son with Father, to complete the Godhead.

70. The Able. (*Al-Qādir-o*) القادر

71. The Potent. (*Al-Muqtadir-o*) المقتدر

A. One should exercise control over one's baser desires.

B. Divine epithets occuring in the Qur'ān, viz., "Do they not see that Allah who created the heavens and the earth is Able (*Qādirūn*) to create their likes" (17:99). "And Allah is Potent (*Muqtadirūn*) over everthing" (18 : 45). Both the titles may signify the same possessing power or ability signifying one who does what he will, according to what wisdom requires and without any let or hinderence from any quarter. Normally these epithets are employed by the Qur'ān to drive home the fact that God has power over everything. He gives life and also death ; He causes the rise and downfall and it is by His command that anything happens in the world. Therefore one should not forget Him who has bestowed prosperity and can change it into poverty, and vice versa. If one keeps this fact before him, one will never do any wrong to others. He will exercise control over his desires which incite him for their fulfilment at every cost or in any manner.

72. The Advancer. (*Al-Muqaddim-o*) المقدم

73. The Deferrer. (*Al-Mu'akhkhir-o*) المؤخر

A. One should be leading in obedience to God and put off wrong doing.

B. These epithets do not occur in the Qur'ān. They, however, allude to the absolute power of God and

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man's utter helplessness before him. Let alone doing any good or harm, man or for that matter any other being is incapable of hastening or delaying any benefit or loss. The Qur'ān says, 'Verily thy Lord is the Doer of whatever He intends.' (11 : 10) He can do anything without any let or hindrance on the part of anyone. The God of Islam is the absolute ruler of the world and man. All the natural phenomena and laws are subordinate to His will and nobody can in any way interfere or intercede with Him.

74. The First (*Al-Awwal-o*) الاول

75. The Last. (*Al-Ākhir-o*) الآخر

76. The Evident. (*Az-Zāhir-o*) الظاهر

77. The Immanent. (*Al-Bātin-o*) الباطن

A. Should be first in matters relating to religion but last in worldly affairs ; conform to law in one's behaviour and attain perfection of spirit.

B. The Qur'ān refers to all the four epithets beautifully in verse 57:3 which reads: "He is the First and the Last, and the Evident and the Immanent, and He is Knower of everything". The First signifies Eternal, without beginning *i. e.*, prior to every other existing entity. Similarly the Last suggests that He shall survive all existing entities, is Everlasting and without end. Evident means Manifest in regard to His attributes or self-evident in respect of the *fact* of His existence while Immanent implies that He is transcendent in regard to His *person* or subtle in respect of the *nature* of His existence. 'The pair of seemingly opposite qualities, First and Last, Evident and Immanent, Power and Wisdom, Giving of life and

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death etc., are referred to here to point to the contrast of our human frailty, in which monosticism may not be the same as humility, spending may not be the same as charity, and so on.' (AYA).

In a supplication recorded by Imam Ahmad, Muslim, Tirmidhi and Baihaqi on the authority of Abū Huraira, the holy Prophet is reported to have said that:

Thou art the First, nothing existed before Thee,
Thou art the Last, there shall be nothing after Thee.
Thou art the Evident, there is nothing above Thee,
Thou art the Immanent, there is nothing hidden from Thee.

The Qur'ān also speaks of the eternal life of hereafter but that should not create any doubt since it also says: 'Everything will perish except His own Face" *i. e.*, the only reality is God. The whole phenomenal world is subject to flux and change and will pass away, but God will endure for ever.

78. The Protector, The Ruler. (*Al-Wālī-o*) الوالی

A. One should have command over one's self.

B. This epithet has been taken from the Qur'ānic verse "Nor is for them any Protector besides Him." (13:11). The reference is to the people who do not change themselves and in consequence of their persistent unruliness draw upon themselves the Divine wrath and then there is none to hold it back from them. The meaning is obvious: God is the last refuge of man and there is no intercessor or patron or guardian who can intervene in the will of God.

79. The Exalted, The High. (*Al-Muta'ālī-o*) المتعالی

A. Should dominate over the devil within oneself.

B. The title occurs in the Qur'ān : "Knower of the

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hidden and the manifest !, The Great ! The Exalted ! (13:9)." The epithet means 'one above the description of the attributes of the created being'. God being beyond all definitions—transcending every concept and every form—the attributes employed to describe His majesty do not impose any limitation inherent in the human speech. Just as God completely dominates over everything, man ought to exercise control over his predilictions and desires. The theories like 'irresistible impulse' advanced for explaining away certain crimes are rejected by Islam.

80. The Benign. (*Al-Barr-o*) البر

A. Should be beneficent to all.

B. The epithet occurs in the Qur'ān : "Verily He ! it is He the Benign, the Merciful." (52 : 28). The Divine title invites attention to the basic factor in human relationship that mutual generosity in dealing with one other is necessary for it would be in keeping with this Divine Attribute. Social life cannot be cordial, friendly and happy if each and every individual insists on his or her own rights. This Attributive Name points to the need of being lenient and generous in dealings with one another. In another verse the Qur'ān exhorts the believers : "And if you act generously, it is nearer to piety. Do not forget to show generosity in your dealings with one another for God sees what you do." (2 : 237).

81. The Relenting. (*At-Tawwāb-o*) التواب

A. Should be ever-willing to forgive others.

B. A title frequently used in the Qur'ān viz., "Surely it is He Who is Relenting, Merciful." (2 : 37) So it is to God that one must always turn in repentance as He is ever willing to forgive the sins of the repentant.

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The Qur'ān says at another place : "Say thou : My bondsmen who have committed extravagance against themselves; despair not of the mercy of Allah : Verily Allah will forgive the sins altogether. Verily He ! He is the Forgiving. The Merciful." (39 : 53).

The reasons for repeating this attribute of God frequently is to emphasise that 'the God of Islam, unlike the God of so many religions, is neither jealous nor vindictive. This required frequent reiteration not only in view of the doctrines of pagans but also of the teaching of the Bible, 'Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not ; for he will not pardon your transgressions' (Ex. 23 : 21) 'He is Holy God : he is a jealous God ; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins (Jo. 24 : 19)' (MA).

Forgiveness being a part of Mercy, such a merit has been attached to it that the believers are implored to forgive and bear the excesses against them patiently for it is good for them and meritorious in the sight of God. The Qur'ān says :

"If you retaliate, then retaliate to the same extent that ye were injured ; but if ye can endure patiently, best will it be for those who patiently endure.

"Endure thou with patience. The endurance is only by (the help of) Allah." (16 : 126-27).

82. The Avenger. (*Al-Muntaqim-o*) المنتقم

A. There should be no let up while avenging for the sake of God.

B. "And who is a great wrong-doer than he who is reminded of His signs, and he turns aside therefrom ? Verily We are going to be Avenger unto the culprits." (32 : 22) The title in this verse as well as in the verses 43 : 41 and 44 : 16 alludes to the punishment

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of the wrong-doers on the Day of Judgement. The whole philosophy of life unfolded by the Qur'ān is that this world has not been created by God for play or sport with no wisdom behind it, or with no purpose or object. Man has not been left on his own to do whatever he likes without having to answer for his actions. For the good and the bad cannot be the same in the sight of God, the good must be rewarded and those who reject the commandments of God and spread evil and corruption in this world must be punished in the Hereafter. God has appointed a Day for that purpose when each soul will be retributed justly for his actions. And who can be a better 'Avenger' of misdeeds than God who is fully aware of our actions and their results ?

83. The Pardoning. (*Al-'Afuw-o*) العفو

A. Should pardon others as much as possible.

B. "Verily Allah is ever Pardoning, Forgiving", (4: 43) says the Qur'ān to emphasise Divine Mercy. *'Afū* means 'to erase' or to 'blot out' besides 'to pardon' and 'to pass over'. These epithets employed in the Qur'ān really allude to the fact that the gates of Divine Mercy are always open for the sinners and invite them to seek pardon from God for their temporary deviations from the right path. Describing the clemency of God Who is ever-willing to forgive the sinners, the Qur'ān employs an alluringly charming diction inviting those who have deviated from the path of virtue to return broken in spirit with a sense of guilt to God and they would find that sympathy, magnanimity and mercy of God are at hand to exonerate their sins. Divine forgiveness driven home through a number of Attributive Names is meant to do away with the misery and suffering human race had to endure because of the doctrines of inherent

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sinfulness of man upheld by several religions. The monastic orders of the Medieval Ages had developed these with an appaling vividness. The humanity scared by these ghastly visions and glimpses of eternal suffering felt relieved by Islam's emphasis on God's all-embracing mercy and the efficacy of repentance. The Prophet was never tired of telling the people how God was Very-Forgiving; that His love for man was more tender than that of the mother-bird for her young. He also taught man to forget and forgive others as a means of attaining propinquity to God.

84. The Tender. (*Ar-Ra'ūf-o*) الرؤف

A. Should have tender regard for the God-fearing.

B. Yet another epithet of the Supreme Being manifesting another aspect of His mercy. This title has been frequently used in the Qur'ān as, e.g., 'Surely Allah is to mankind Tender, Merciful" (2 : 143) i.e., He has solicitude, tender regard and compassionate care for them. Divine mercy is such a recurring theme of the Qur'ān that it would be no exaggeration to identify the Divine concept presented by it as the 'God of Mercy'. Divine grace is not limited to any particular people, race or nation. It is common to entire human race. The object of drawing attention to the different aspects of divine mercy and compassion, which really permeates a large number of other attributes and imparts them a qualifying touch is to ask the people to develop this quality in themselves. Here are a few such examples.

"Virtue is not (in this) that you turn your faces to the east and the west, but virtue is of (him) who believes in Allah and the Last Day and the angels and the Book, and the prophets, and gives (of his) substance, for love of Him, to the kindred and

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orphans and the needy and the way-farer and the beggers and for (redeeming) necks". (2 : 177).

"And they feed, for love of Him, with food the destitute, the orphan and the captives—(saying) We feed you only for the sake of Allah ; we desire not from you (any) recompense or thanks (76:8-9).

85. Sovereign of the Dominion, Owner of Majesty and Beneficence. مالك الملك ذوالجلال والاكرام (*Mālik-ul-Mulk-i-Zul-jalāl-i-wal-Ikrāmi*)

A. One should become master of His own self and show respect to the God-fearing.

B. An epithet of God occurring in the Qur'ān (3 : 26,55 : 27, 78) meaning that the Divine Being is full of Majesty, Bounty and Honour. 'Two ideas are prominent in the word *ikrām*, (1) the idea of generosity, as proceeding from the person whose attribute it is, and (2) the idea of honour, as given by others to the person whose attribute it is' (AYA). God of Islam, the *'Owner of Majesty and Beneficence'* is never distant and remote from man in spite of His Glory, Power and Transcendence. 'He is the constant companion of His servants, their unfailing support and an unfallible prop to those in need and distress—unlike so many gods of polytheism elevated far above man, living in Olympian heights and having little or no vital connection with them.' (MA) God is always willing to answer the call of man : "And when My bondmen ask thee (O Prophet) regarding Me, then surely I am nigh. I listen to the prayer of every suppliant when he calls on Me ; so let them listen to My call and believe in Me ; (so) that they may walk in the right path." (2 : 186). His all-pervading character which is independent of all conditions of time and space, and intimacy with His

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creatures has been alluded to in certain other verses which read :" We are nearer to him then his jugular vein" (50 : 16) and "He is with you wherever you may be." (57 : 4)

86. The Equitable. (*Al-Muqsit-o*) المقسط

A. One should be just to others.

B. A title of God not occurring in the Qur'ān but mentioned in the *hadīth*. Two other names alluding to the justice of God are *Al-Hakam-o* and *Al-'Adl-o* (No. 29 and 30). Justice and benevolence are the two qualities which have been commended repeatedly by the Qur'ān. In *Sūrah Al-Nahl* we read : 'God commanded justice, the doing of good and liberality to kith and kin" (16 : 90). It commands people to do justice even to their enemies. "O you who believe ! Be steadfast witnesses for God in equity, and let not hatred of any people seduce you that you deal not justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to piety." (5 : 8). Again, in *Sūrah al-An'ām* we read, "Whenever you speak, speak justly, even if a near relative is concerned." (6 : 152) Many more verses of the Qur'ān can be cited in which the believers have been commanded to administer justice with complete impartiality since God is Himself the Best of all Judges. "Surely Allah does not wrong any one a grain's weight" (4 : 40) and "No one will be wronged at all if it be the weight of a grain of mustered-seed." (21 : 47).

87. The Assembler. (*Al-Jām'i-o*) الجامع

A. One should combine knowledge with virtuous deeds.

B. A Divine name occurring in the Qur'ān, "Our Lord : surely Thou art the Assembler of mankind on a Day of which there is no doubt," (3:9) and "verily Allah

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is about to gather hypocrites and infidels in Hell together. (4 : 140) The 'Assembler' in these verses means that God will resurrect all who had once lived and had died in order to requit them for their actions. In several verses the Qur'ān has referred to the doubts of those who think that resurrection on the Day of Judgement is impossible and given convincing reasons that it will not at all be difficult for Him to bring them to life again e. g., in verses 17 : 49-52, 19 : 66-67, 22 : 5 etc.

88. The Self-Sufficing. (*Al-Ghanī-o*) الغنی

89. The Enricher, (*Al-Mughnī-o*) المغنی

A. One should be independent of the other, but help others in their needs.

B. The epithet *Al-Ghanī* occurs in the Qur'ān at several places viz., "And know that Allah is Self-sufficing, Praiseworthy." (2 : 267) Both the Divine names are derived from the same root meaning to be rich, independent, or in comfort of life. Surely God is independent of all wants and He has no need of any presents or oblations. On the other hand, He can enrich any one out of His benevolence. Both these names express the independence of the Supreme Being from the necessities and requirements of mankind and His ability to grant whatever He wants to anyone. Another name of the Almighty carrying an analogous sense is *As-Samad* (no. 69). All these attributes point to the fact that God is Absolute and Independent. To Him are to be addressed all supplications and only He is capable of answering the prayers of his servants.

90. The Withholder. (*Al-Mān'i-o*) المانع

A. One should not spend lavishly on occasions not

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enjoined by the Sharī'ah.

B. An epithet which does not occur in the Qur'ān but is to be found in the *hadīth*. God withholds or does not grant our prayer on certain occasions as He, in His infinite wisdom, knows what is good or bad for us. "And man prays for evil as he should pray for good and man is ever hasty" (17 : 11), says the Qur'ān. Were God to grant all the prayers of man, he would be doomed because of his ignorance and hasty nature. It is a common experience that we sometimes consider something good for us but it turns out to be harmful. Thus the decision of God to withhold or deny something coveted by us, is also out of His mercy although we do not perceive it at the moment.

91. The Distresser. (*Az-Zārr-o*) الضآر

A. One should inflict harm on the enemies of God.

B. There is no harm or good which befalls man save with the will and command of God. The title does not occur in the Qur'ān but the idea is to be found in several verses. "And if Allah touches thee with hurt there is no remover thereof but He, and if He intends any good, there is no averter of His grace. He lets it befall on whomsoever of His bondmen He will: and He is the Forgiving, Merciful" (10 : 107). And again, "Whispering is only from Satan that he may grieve the believers; and he cannot harm them at all save with the leave of Allah. So in Allah let the faithful trust" (58 : 10). 'Evil can harm no one who is good, except in so far as (1) there is some question of trial in God's Universal Plan, or (2) what appears to be harm may be really good. Nothing happens without God's will and permission. And we must always trust Him, and not our cleverness or any

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adventitious circumstances that draw us the least bit from the path of rectitude.' (AYA).

92. The Benefactor. (*An-Nāf'i-o*) النافع

A. Should cause benefit to those who tread the righteous path.

B. The epithet does not occur in the Qur'ān but the idea is found in a number of verses. Here are a few examples. "Say thou: shall we call upon beside Allah, what can neither profit us nor hurt us." (2:71) and "He said: do not worship them besides Allah what can neither profit you nor hurt you." (6:66). It is manifestly clear that "Truly it is He, the Beneficent, the Merciful (52:28) who gives us sustenance (3:60-62), is the Lord of Bounties (3:170) and who provides gifts from the heavens and earth" (14:32-33). As a matter of fact nobody can count the favours of God (14:34) as his bounties and favours to man are illimitable and innumerable.

93. The Light. (*An-Nūr-o*) النور

A. One should illuminate oneself with the light of faith and divine knowledge.

B. A title of Almighty meaning the light, faith, divine wisdom and revelation from God (viz. 2:17,257,5:44 and 4:175).

This Divine Name has been taken from the verse 35 of the 24th Chapter *Surat-un-Nūr* which is incomparable in grandeur and diction.

"God is Light.
Of the heavens and the earth.
The parable of His Light
Is as if there were a Niche
And within it a Lamp:
The Lamp enclosed in Glass.

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The glass as it were
A brilliant star :
Lit from a blessed Tree,
An Olive, neither of the East,
Nor of the West,
Whose oil is well-nigh
Luminous,
Though fire scarce touched it :
Light upon Light !
God doth guide
Whom He will
To His Light:
God doth set forth Parables
For men: and God
Doth know all things.

'Glorious, illimitable Light, cannot be described or measured. And there are grades and grades of it, passing transcendently into regions of spiritual height, which man's imagination can scarcely conceive of. The topmost pinnacle is the true prototypal Light, the real Light, of which all others were reflections, the Light of God. Hence the saying of the holy Prophet about God's Seventy thousand veils of Light.' (AYA).

Nur or light, is that which manifests hidden things, and Allah is called here the *Light of the heavens and the earth*, because He has manifested them and brought them into existence. The Qur'ān always speaks of *An-Nūr* only in its singular form which indicates that the source of divine Light or guidance is only one. As Dr. Iqbal says the metaphor of Light as applied to God must, in view of modern knowledge, be taken to suggest the Absoluteness of God.

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94. The Guide. (*Al-Hādi-o*) الهادی

A. Should continue to guide the evil-doers on the right path.

B. The title does not occur in the Qur'ān but the verb occurs at several places to suggest that it is God alone who guides man. 'He guides whom He will to the straight path,' (2:142) and 'Allah guides not the wrongdoers,' (2:258) are some of the examples. It is to be noted that the verses speaking of divine guidance make it clear that divine guidance is available only to those who have a disposition for it and obey the divine command. Disobedience and transgression, when formed as a habit by the sinners and rejectors of truth, deaden the desire to know what is truth. They are then not allowed to take advantage of divine guidance.

95. The Originator. (*Al-Bad'ī-o*) البديع

A. Should endeavour to find out new ways to follow the Straight Path.

B. God is "The Originator of the heavens and the earth ; and whenever He desires an affair, He merly says it: 'be', and it becomes." (2 : 117) '*Bad'ī* is the Originator of the creation, according to His own will, not after the similitude of anything pre-existing.' (LL). 'He is thus the absolute Author—not a mere manufacturer or designer as conceived by several pagan peoples—Independent of any or every material or pattern. Even the Jews, under the influence of Alexandrian philosophy and swayed by Platonic and Neoplatonic ideas, had come to regard the act of creation as carried into effect through intermediate agencies, sub-deities, as it were, with independent existence and will of their own.'(AM) The 'affair' referred to in the above verse includes

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abstract as well as material things. The Islamic concept of God thus sets at naught the ideas that the creation of anything by God is dependent on the previous existence of matter and soul and the adaptability of their attributes.

96. The Everlasting. (*Al-Bāqī-o*) الباقی

A. Should do works that will be of benefit after one dies.

B. The title does not occur in the Qur'ān, but the root from which it is derived means remaineth, lasteth permanently or more lasting. The Qur'ān says: "And Allah is Best and Most Abiding." (20:73) God being ever-lasting, He shall remain when everything conceivable has perished.

97. The Heir. (*Al-Wāris-o*) الوارث

A. Should endeavour to inherit the knowledge brought by the prophets of God.

B. Yet another title of the Almighty, though not occuring in the Qur'ān, to indicate that He is the Last, The Everlasting. It may also mean that everything we possess or find in this world, will ultimately revert back to God. Actually speaking whatever we have and claim to be ours is just held in trust for a limited period since "to God belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth." (31 : 180).

98. The Right-Minded. (*Ar-Rashīd-o*) الرشید

A. Should direct the people to the right course of action.

B. The epithet does not occur in the Qur'ān for God. It suggests that man without any knowledge of the future and unable to foresee the result of his actions, should depend on God who can alone help him to

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take the right course. The title has been used in the *hadīth*.

99. The Patient. (*As-Sabūr-o*) الصبور

A. One should be patient in difficulties.

B. *Sabara*, the root from which this title has been derived, means to endure, to be patient. Although the title does not occur in the Qur'ān the idea occurs frequently. The Qur'ān describes God as the Most Forbearing (*c.f.*, 2 : 225, 235, 263; 3: 155 etc) who never punishes the infidels and sinners immediately and even continues to provide them with His favours leaving the punishment for the Hereafter. The Qur'ān repeatedly impresses upon man, as this Divine title also suggests, to be patient in difficulties and show perseverence and constancy in good works and righteousness.

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